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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 OTTAWA 000695

SIPDIS

STATE FOR G/TIP AND WHA/CAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/08/2019

TAGS: PHUM PGOV KTIP KCRM CA

SUBJECT: TIP: BC PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS A SUCCESSFUL MODEL FOR CANADA

REF: A. OTTAWA 378

1B. OTTAWA 151

1C. OTTAWA 044

Classified By: A/PolCouns Kurt van der Walde for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).).

11. (C) Summary: Increased collaboration among the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), British Columbia (BC) government officials, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has strengthened the province's capacity to combat trafficking in persons (TIP). Advocacy groups and police continue to disagree over the definition of trafficking and the likelihood of an increase in trafficking of women as sex workers for the Vancouver Winter Olympic Games in February 12010. The highest hurdles to criminal TIP prosecution, according to RCMP and provincial officials, are prosecutors' lack of familiarity with new trafficking legislation and the continuing need to train law enforcement personnel to recognize trafficking victims. Mission believes that U.S. training programs for BC prosecutors and police could support increased TIP prosecutions, spurring other provinces to follow BC's lead. End summary.

12. (U) Poloff discussed the province's anti-trafficking efforts in separate conversations between August 31 and September 3 in Vancouver and Surrey, BC , with RCMP "E" Division Border Integrity Program investigators, the BC Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons (BC OCTIP) director, and victims' support NGO leaders. All interlocutors stressed the province's anti-TIP efforts as important in the lead up to the 2010 Winter Olympics.

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RCMP and BC OCTIP: Collaborating with NGOs but needing more prosecutorial support  
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13. (C) An RCMP Sergeant, who is an undercover Investigator, and Constable Caroline Raymond gave a frank analysis of BC's enforcement and prosecution of suspected traffickers. In the last two years, the RCMP has significantly increased its training of street officers to identify trafficking victims and investigate suspected traffickers. However, both officers expressed a strong frustration that their investigations are stymied by prosecutors, who are known as "Crown Counsels" in the Canadian legal system. Both investigators claimed that prosecutors are reluctant to bring trafficking cases to court without more precedent which they say is lacking due to the relatively new legislation. Therefore, they said, the RCMP has been looking for a case "with a bow on it" to serve as precedent. The officers identified two cases now under investigation which they believe are exemplars: a case of forced labor and domestic servitude resulting in the near starvation of the victim; another involving trafficking in Southeast Asian women for Vancouver brothels conducted by drug smugglers as a side business. RCMP expects to make an arrest in the first case

in the next "week or two" and is continuing undercover investigations in the latter case. Raymond expressed the strong hope that these cases will "educate" prosecutors to the severity and scale of human trafficking in BC.

¶4. (C) The RCMP has also increased its information sharing and collaborative efforts with BC OCTIP, local advocacy groups, and community support organizations. In the forced labor case above, the Salvation Army first identified the victim to the BC OCTIP office which then worked with the Salvation Army to convince the victim to speak to the RCMP. According to the RCMP and BC OCTIP, without close collaboration by all parties, the victim could well have chosen to flee without pressing charges, particularly as he speaks no English.

¶5. (U) Additionally, the RCMP, in conjunction with BC OCTIP, offers a one-day training course for RCMP officers, Crown Counsels, and other interested parties on the definition of trafficking, the 2005 criminal code additions, identifiers of trafficking victimization, and questioning techniques with suspected victims of trafficking. During 2009 the RCMP has offered the course three times to about 300 participants, including at least two Crown Counsels. The RCMP and BC OCTIP interlocutors expressed strong interest in continuing and increasing cross-border training by U.S. prosecutors for Canadian law enforcement and Crown Counsels.

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Impact of Olympic Games on trafficking

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OTTAWA 00000695 002 OF 002

¶6. (C) RCMP interlocutors also took the opportunity to share the findings of an internal report that analyzed the likelihood of increased TIP cases during the winter Olympic Games. RCMP does not believe the Games will follow the presumed pattern of other international sporting events as the Winter Olympics traditionally attract a "smaller, more upscale, family audience" as compared to the Summer Olympics, World Cup competitions, and other major sporting events at which large numbers of young, single, or unaccompanied men gather. The RCMP study matches conclusions by the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) following the 2004 Athens Summer Olympics and the 2006 World Cup in Germany. Global Alliance found "an increase of trafficking in persons into forced prostitution does not occur around sporting events" and the IOM stated "an increase in human trafficking, during and after the World Cup did not occur." However, the RCMP is closely monitoring rentals of townhouses and advertisements for personal services and any increase in sex tourism surrounding the Games.

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NGOs: At odds with law enforcement over definition of trafficking and scale of problem

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¶7. (U) Trisha Baptie, executive director of Honour Consulting and Ministries and a founder of EVE: Exploited Voices Educating, disagrees with the RCMP conclusions on trafficking and the Olympics. A former prostitute, she has dedicated herself to helping women escape from sex work. Based on verbal accounts from current prostitutes and an increase in online advertising of personal services, she stated that she believes an increase in trafficked women is already occurring to serve the demands of the large numbers of construction workers and others in Vancouver in advance of the February Games. (Note: Honour Consulting and Ministries defines all prostitution as forced and therefore all prostituted women as "trafficked" regardless of their age or statement of consent. End note)

**¶8. (C) Comment:** BC prosecutors' lack of awareness and training on TIP issues appears to be a significant shortcoming to the province's otherwise considerable and commendable anti-trafficking efforts. The RCMP's and BC OCTIP's strong statements of interest in bringing U.S. prosecutors to BC as peer educators is an excellent opportunity to support Canadian law enforcement's attempts to combat trafficking. End comment.

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